



# Press release

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## ***More marriages and more partnerships***

According to the latest figures by Statistics Netherlands the total number of marriages in 2002 will be an estimated 87 thousand, against 82 thousand last year. The number of marriages between persons of the same sex fell from 2.4 thousand in 2001 to 1.9 thousand in 2002. The number of registered partnerships will more than double in 2002, from over 3 thousand in 2001 to almost 8 thousand in 2002. Statistics Netherlands assumes this is related to the phenomenon of 'flash divorces'.

### ***Many marriages in February***

After decreases in the number of marriages from 88 thousand in 2000 to 82 thousand in 2001, the number of marriages is rising again. This increase is due to three very popular dates in February. Considerable more people than usual married on the second, the twentieth and the twenty second of February yielding 2-2-2002, 20-02-2002 and 22-2-2002 as wedding dates. The number of marriages in February 2002 (5.1 thousand) was therefore considerably higher than in February 2001 (3.4 thousand).

The extra number of marriages in February did not lead to a drop in the number of marriages in the following months. It would seem that the number of marriages in 2001 was lower because couples waited for the special dates in 2002.

Another cause for the increase in the number of marriages in 2002 was the increase in population.

### ***Fewer G&L marriages***

Since April 2001 marriage is open to same-sex couples. In 2001 2.4 thousand couples made use of the possibilities, but in 2002 the number of same-sex marriages fell to an estimated 1.9 thousand. Same-sex couples do not seem to be very interested in marriage. Statistics Netherlands estimates that there are about 50 thousand same-sex couples in the Netherlands, of whom less than 10 percent has married so far.

When registered partnerships were introduced in 1998, same-sex couples were the ones to use it most. When G&L marriages became possible, the number of same-sex partnerships fell sharply. In 2002 there will be less than a thousand registered partnerships between two men or two women, as was the case in 2001. In 1998 there were still 3 thousand same-sex registered

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partnerships.

### ***Strong increase in male-female partnerships***

There has been a big increase in the number of partnerships between men and women in 2002. In 2001 less than 3 thousand male-female partnerships were registered while the expected figure for 2002 is 7 thousand. One reason for this increase is the phenomenon of 'flash divorce'. Two thirds of the new partnerships are changes from marriage into a partnership. By changing a marriage into a partnership, the marriage can be dissolved without going to court. The increase in same-sex partnerships in 2002 can also be attributed to changes from marriages into partnerships.

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### ***Marriages and partnerships***

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	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002*</b>
	x 1 000	
Marriages	82,1	87,4
male-female	79,7	85,5
same-sex	2,4	1,9
Partnerships	3,3	7,8
male-female	2,7	6,9
same-sex	0,6	0,9

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\* Estimate based on figures up to November

**Source: Statistics Netherlands**